

## UNCLE ABRAHAM'S LEGACY

By A. A. Patrick

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Although in past years Silas Bragg and his family had been the sole recipients of many benefactions from Uncle Abraham, as the burden of old age began to heap itself upon him and his earning powers became proportionately less, and less the amount family had to ponder over the problem of getting rid of the decrepit old gentleman against the time when his feebleness should make him absolutely dependent.

Uncle Abe, as he was called, had served as a Confederate soldier in the civil war. When Lee surrendered at Appomattox he, with thousands of other soldiers, trudged back to the places they had left four years previously, but time and war had wrought amazing changes everywhere. The few blood relations that Uncle Abe possessed were all gone. Some had died in battle, and those who remained had moved to other parts. After looking about the village he finally made arrangements for board and lodging at the Bragg homestead and, with a small square box, the only thing he carried, domiciled himself at that place.

During the first years Uncle Abe found his environments to be congenial, and his sojourn, as already stated, proved to be exceedingly profitable to Silas Bragg, who, having won the confidence and gratitude of the ex-soldier, came into possession of property of considerable value.

Consequently it was a great shock to Uncle Abe when he learned that it was the purpose of the Braggs to cast him out now that they held the title to all his property. It had been his desire to live out his days at this place. He had received intimations of their designs through the increasing irritableness of Mrs. Bragg and the unkindness of other members of the household. For days and weeks afterward he moped about the little village in a weary and dejected manner. The people would gaze after him when he passed and remark that Uncle Abe was going down mighty fast.

This state of affairs continued for nearly a month, then it was noticed that the veteran seemed to have taken a new hold on life. He moved about with an agility that belied his years; he laughed and joked with a zest that was surprising, and, above all, there lurked in his eyes a mischievous twinkle and glitter that the loungers at the village store had never taken note of before. However much the wonder was, no solution was ever reached by them.

The real cause of this gaiety on the part of Uncle Abe lay in the fact that certain things had been happening at the Braggs'. Only a few evenings before, Mr. Silas Bragg, on arriving home in a rather tottery state, strongly admonished Mrs. Bragg because she apparently had not acted according to his instructions.

"Where's old gray coat?" he queried. "Is he gone yet? No? Didn't I say bounce him. What're you mean? Go in to keep him here to eat a feller out of house and home? Didn't I tell ye to make it hot for 'im? I'm a honest man, I am, an' I don't want to be hard on nobody, but he's done eat up the worth of everything I got out of 'im an' I ain't goin' to have 'im no longer. Now, ye get rid of 'im; pester the life out of 'im; spill hot coffee on 'im. D'ye hear me? I say, get rid of 'im."

Having delivered himself of these weighty remarks, Mr. Bragg settled comfortably down in a chair and dozed off into a deep slumber.

On the following morning Uncle Abe did not appear at the breakfast table as he was usually wont to do. Mr. Bragg, having eaten his breakfast, again commanded Mrs. Bragg to "make it hot for 'im," and departed. An hour passed. Still Uncle Abe did not appear.

"I'll show 'im," piped the matron in a shrill voice. "I'll learn 'im to be abed. Martha Ann, go get that syringe an' a pan of cold water, an' give it to 'im through the keyhole." Before this order could be executed, however, a thought of such a pleasing nature entered the mind of Mrs. Bragg that it almost made her jump for joy.

"Maybe the old codger's dead," she ejaculated. "Run, Nancy, an' see," she called out.

Nancy, as commanded, took up a position in front of Uncle Abe's room, peering cautiously through the keyhole. What she saw made her fall over backward and scramble by the hall toward the kitchen. At sight of such action on the part of Nancy, Mrs. Bragg could hardly restrain herself from shouting. She felt certain that Uncle Abe had left this earthly sphere for other parts. This opinion was soon dispelled, for when the girl had reached the kitchen and had sufficiently recovered to make explanations, she told of what she had seen in something after the following manner:

"Oh, ma! Oh, ma! He had his box open on the bed, an' it's jest plum full o' greenback bills!"

In a little time after this occurrence Uncle Abe came out of his room. Mrs. Bragg, considering the new light on the situation, made haste to prepare a warm and tasty meal for him. He seemed to be in excellent spirits. He ate heartily of the meal, and then pushed back his chair and made the following astounding remarks:

"Mrs. Bragg," he said, "I have just been doing a little thinking. I am getting old. At the best I can't live many years, and I don't want to be moaning about. Now, I'll tell you what I am going to do. I'm going to stay with

you and Silas what few days I have left. When I'm gone there's a little square box in my room which you can have. I'm not going to tell you what's in it, but I'll say this: I think that what's in the box ought to be worth a good many thousand."

"Uncle Abe," broke in Mrs. Bragg, "you are the kindest and best man in the world. Why, you have a home here as long as you live. Whatever we are near and dear to us, Uncle Abe, and we don't think nothin' about whether we'll get anything or not. Why, only this morning Silas was speaking to me, sayin' we must tell you this. Yes, indeed, Uncle Abe, you needn't worry about a home."

That evening when Mr. Bragg returned he looked at his wife sternly. "Well, has old?" He didn't finish. "Sh-h-h!" interrupted Mrs. Bragg, holding up a warning hand. Then she went over and whispered in his ear.

Mr. Bragg apparently comprehended, for in a few minutes he called out: "Nancy, go an' see if Uncle Abe needs a fire in his room. D'ye hear me? I say, go an' see if Uncle Abe needs a fire, an' if he does build it. Martha Ann, go ask Uncle Abe what he'd like to have for supper."

After the second girl had been dispatched on an errand to Uncle Abe's room Mr. Bragg turned to his wife and said in a low tone:

"What ye want to do is to treat 'im right. Let 'im have his way 'bout anything. Give 'im everything that's good to eat—pile an' such truck as that. Don't want 'im goin' off from here wakin' that box. Whew! How much d'ye reckon's in it?"

Thus the old soldier entered upon an era of unbroken peace and quiet and good living. His every whim was humored. He was petted and waited on continually. There was no length to which the Braggs would not go to put Uncle Abe at ease. They even furnished him with small sums of money. He told them that he had some money, but did not wish to break a bill. Seeing that they would get all his bills in time to come they were not reluctant to humor him in this, as also they did in many other things. Indeed if anything were refused Uncle Abe he would begin to make preparations which, the startled Bragg family thought, were signs that he meant to remove himself and the square box to some other place.

This would never do, of course, and after a sound raving from Silas they would again be whipped into the line of obedience and homage to the ex-soldier.

In the course of time, as was natural, Uncle Abe died, and Mr. Bragg, in a last splendid burst of generosity, gave him a fitting burial. When the sad rites were over Mr. Bragg hastened to return home.

Followed by Mrs. Bragg and Nancy Bragg and Martha Ann Bragg, he unlocked a certain room, unlocked a certain trunk and unlocked a certain box, and—a cry of joy died half uttered in his throat. He got upon his feet and kicked the cat and dog into the yard, then cursed till the very walls of the building trembled. Neighbors heard the shrill voice of Mrs. Bragg and the deep curses of Silas and wondered what the trouble could be.

The box was full of Confederate bills. On top of them lay a little note, which read:

"I think—I always did think—this money ought to be worth a good many thousand dollars, but it is not."

Letters From the Inside.  
Among the many "crank" letters that drift from time to time into the offices of most large corporations, especially into publishing houses, are a number bearing a typewritten postscript as follows:

The law obliges us to send the enclosed letter, but we add this to let you know that the writer is an inmate of the asylum and that any attention paid to it will be at your risk.

Sometimes the "crank" epistles are mere business formulas requesting a year's subscription to the magazine and promising to pay when the first copy arrives, but others contain urgent, voluble appeals for all sorts of delectables, of which the mildest are revolvers and cartridges. The momentary whims represented by the letters are almost limitless in their variety. The chronology of such notes is interesting from a pathological standpoint, as usually, however regularly formed, it is shaky and disjointed or broken, betraying physical and mental breakdown.—New York Press.

A Hole in a Stone.  
When primitive man placed a hole through a stone for decorative purposes mainly the result was due to a great deal of trouble and expenditure of time. When he came across a stone with a hole in it he thought the perforation was due to some miraculous power, and accordingly he endowed the stone with supernatural attributes. Man's belief in the marvelous ought to diminish in exact proportion to his information. A stone may be formed of the same siliceous, only one portion is crystalline, the other amorphous. While the crystalline part resists abrasion and solution the amorphous does not. If the amorphous part be in the center of a stone which is in the water it wastes away, and so a hole is the result.

Neighbois.  
A merry party being gathered in a city that made such a racket that the occupant of a neighboring house sent his servant over with a polite message asking if it would be possible for the party to make less noise, since, as the servant announced, "Mr. Smith says that he cannot read." "I am sorry for Mr. Smith," replied the host. "Please present my compliments to your master, say that I am sorry he cannot read, and tell him I could when I was four years old."—London Judy.

## LAUNCHING A VESSEL.

The Crucial Moment Is When She Takes the Water.

That a launch is a matter of mathematics, as well as of great skill and labor, is shown by the fact that the man of science who has the matter in charge always makes a set of calculations showing the strain of the ship and its precise condition at practically every foot of the journey down the ways. If a boat should get in the way, or if it should take an unusual length of time to knock out the keel blocks, or if any one of half a dozen things should cause serious delay, the scientific man knows just how long he can wait and just how far the limit of safety extends.

There is always one supreme moment in a launch, and it is at a time that escapes the average spectator. It is when the vessel gets fairly well into the water. This is when an important factor known as the "moment of buoyancy" comes into play. If you can imagine a vessel sliding down an incline without any water into which to drop, you can see that the vessel would tip down suddenly at the end and which has left the ways the strain near the bow that parts of the cradle were actually pushed right into the bottom of the vessel. It is this danger of disaster that causes the scientific launcher to make the most careful calculations as to the conditions surrounding the ship at every foot of her journey into the water.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.  
Good intentions rarely survive the headache that actuates them.

"When you talk about people behind their backs, do you give them a square deal?"  
You have probably met the bore who, no matter what the attraction, always recalls a better one.

There is this much to be said about the men: Some very fine fish have been caught by very inferior bait.  
They say a man's disposition is sure to come out when he's drunk, and it is sure to come out also when he is buying—when he is spending his money.

When you meet a man on the streets and feel a desire to tell him a story, shorten it. Don't string it out with long and unimportant details. Get to the point at once.—Atchison Globe.

The boy is taught at school that the earth is not square. By and by he finds out for himself that the same thing is true of a good many of the people.

## NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Assessors have filed with the Town Clerk their map, report and assessment of the assessment of a four-foot stone sidewalk on Orange street, and the same is now open for public inspection to those interested. Objections in writing to said report, map and assessment must be filed with the Town Clerk on or before Monday, May 1, 1905, at 8 P. M. By order of the Town Council.

WM. L. JOHNSON, Town Clerk.

Bloomfield, N. J., April 2, 1905.

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LAWN RAKES, Wood, 25c.

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GRASS SHEARS, 29c.

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PRUNING SHEARS, 17c.

WEEDING HOOKS, 10c.

GARDEN HOES, 39c.

LADIES' GARDEN SETS, 69c.

WHEELBARROWS, Canal; half bolted, 1.98.

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WHEELBARROWS, Garden; loose sides, 1.98 up.

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GARDEN HOSE, Wired, 3/4 in., 3-ply, 12c per foot.

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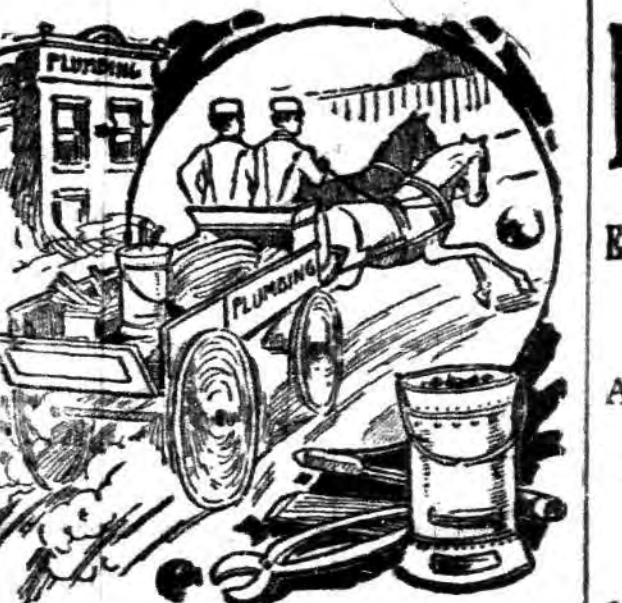
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